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City Regions and the Governance of Economic Development in England: a study of emerging City Regions in the North East

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Referendum on an elected assembly for the North East of England

- Held in November 2004
- Resounding no vote (78%)

“The whole idea of regional government has been blown out of the water by this vote.”

(Bernard Jenkin, Conservative MP)

- Created a governance vacuum and an opportunity for the rise of City Regions in England?



City Regions – issues arising from literature

- Under-bounded cities (Bennett, 1997)
- Fuzzy boundaries (ODPM 2006)
- Multi-level governance
 - ‘muddying of the waters’
- Layering of institutional bodies & politics of rescaling (Brenner 2009)
- The ‘missing middle’ in English Governance (NLGN 2000)
- Treasury led growth agenda (Pike & Tomaney 2009)



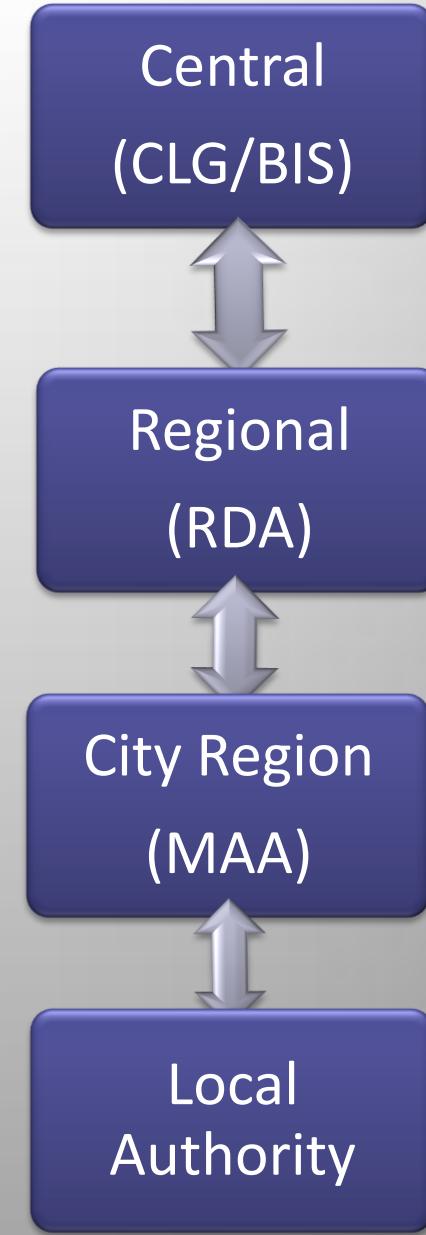
Four issues explored in the paper

1. An additional layer (in vertical hierarchy)
'city regions share one characteristic: not one of them functions as a unitary actor'
(Seberg, 2007)
2. Horizontal integration (Brenner 2004)
3. Differential status and selection
4. Relationship with central state (Rodriquez-Pose 2008)

Multi-level Governance of Economic Development in England

City regions may be regarded as an extra layer in the governance of economic development in England

They create new vertical and horizontal relationships with institutions above, below and around them



Multi-level Governance of Economic Development in the North East

Additional layer – Northern Way pan-regional strategy for North of England; promoted the concept of city regions but are pro-region

Complex horizontal and vertical relationships around MAAs e.g. Emergency Services, Health, Transport etc.



A wider perspective of City Regions

'A city-region is essentially about the economic, social and environmental reach of the city into its hinterland. It is not a homogenous concept with clear boundaries. But it recognises that decisions taken by people – where to live, work, travel to work, shop, visit for entertainment and leisure – and the economic activity by firms and investors – with customers and suppliers – means that there are important economic, environmental and social interdependencies between the city and its neighbouring towns and commuter hinterland. These relationships are not usually accounted for in local authority administrative boundaries'

(Hildreth and Clark, 2005)

City Regions: an economic construct

'...continue to be the construct of geographers and urban planners rather than politicians. They provide the basis for prescribing networks and policy coordination rather than new political institutions. Any new political institutions would require another round of local government reorganization, which would be fiercely resisted. There is a risk of urban dominance, with the cities and their leaders being perceived as neglecting the separate identities and interests of rural areas. Finally, some of the arguments advanced against city regions are similar to those advanced against regional assemblies: that they are essentially technocratic, of interest to elites not ordinary people, and at best a patchwork solution'

(Hazell, 2006)

Sub Regional partnership arrangements in England

Designation	Examples	Mechanism	Status
'Super Council'	Manchester seeking to become the first	Economic Prosperity Boards and senate of council leaders	Statutory governance structures established
Statutory City Region: (MAAwDs with budgets)	Pilots: Manchester & Leeds City Regions	may include EPB and may combine with Integrated Transport Authority (ITA)	Statutory
Multi Area Agreement with Duties (MAAwD)	None designated; consultation document published by CLG (2010)	To be determined	Statutory duty to meet targets
Multi Area Agreement	Tyne and Wear, Tees Valley, South Yorkshire, Liverpool, Leicestershire, Pennine Lancashire, Birmingham, Coventry & black Country, North Kent, West of England, Fylde Coast	public agreement with Government; enhanced freedoms and flexibilities	Voluntary; no additional powers; agreement to work to targets

Why study the North East?

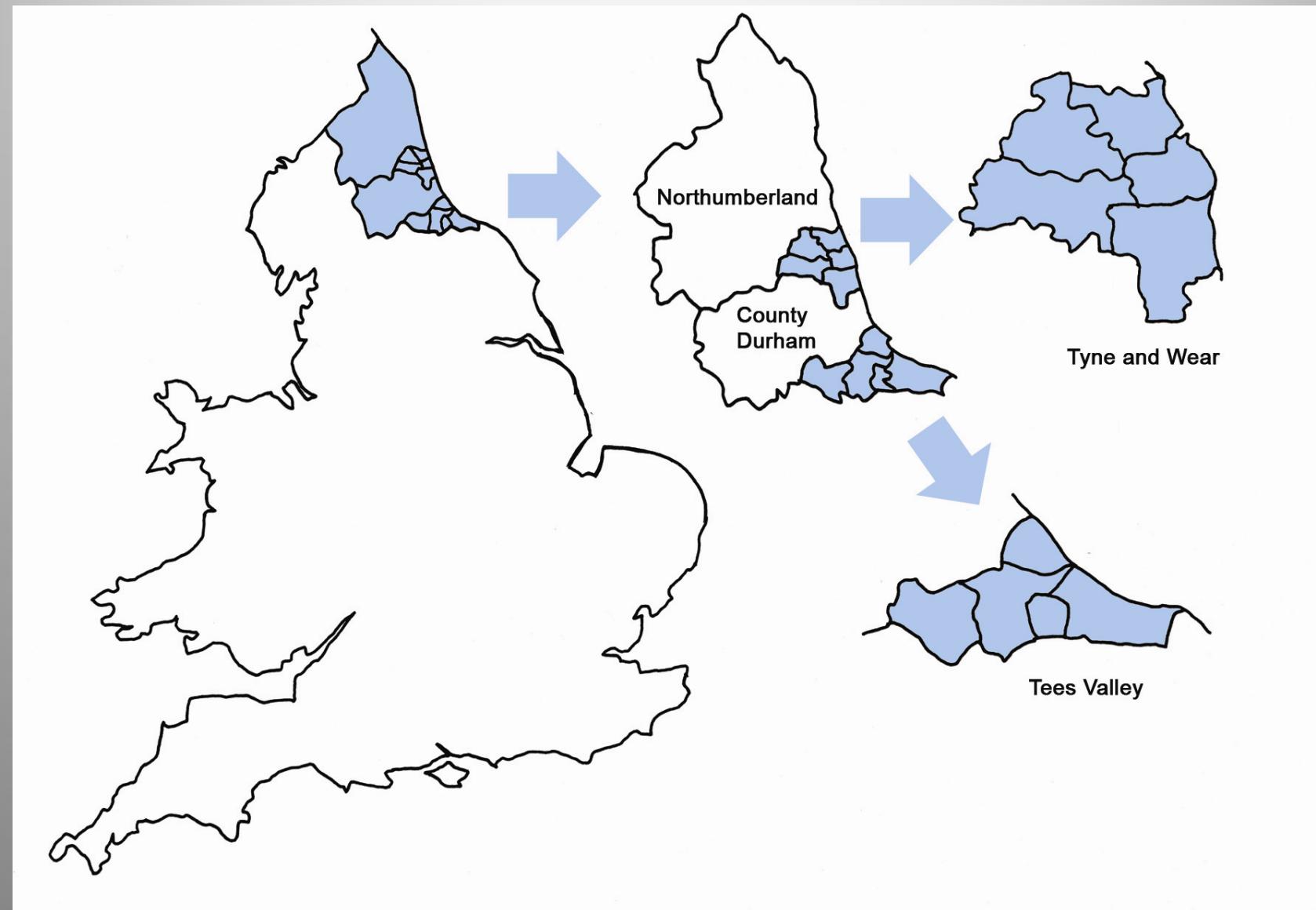
'The weak and fragmented governance structure in the North East suggests that consolidating governance functions of local authorities and strengthening governance capacity at the city region level may be a good option'

(OECD, 2006, p 12)

Two contrasting City Regions in the North East:

- Tees Valley - mature; forerunner of MAA
- Tyne and Wear – relatively new; developing

City Regions in the North East of England

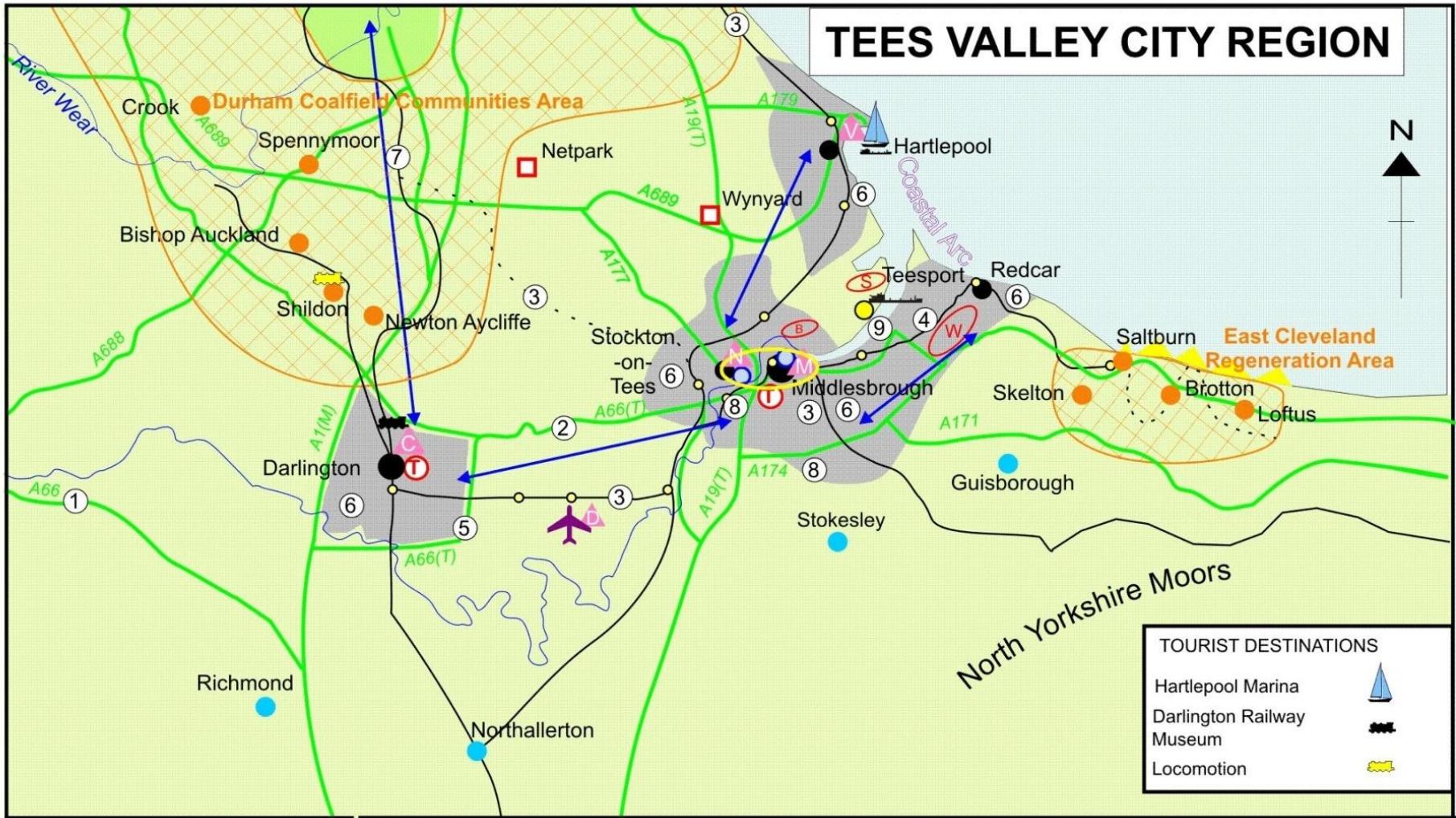


Tees Valley



TEES VALLEY CITY REGION

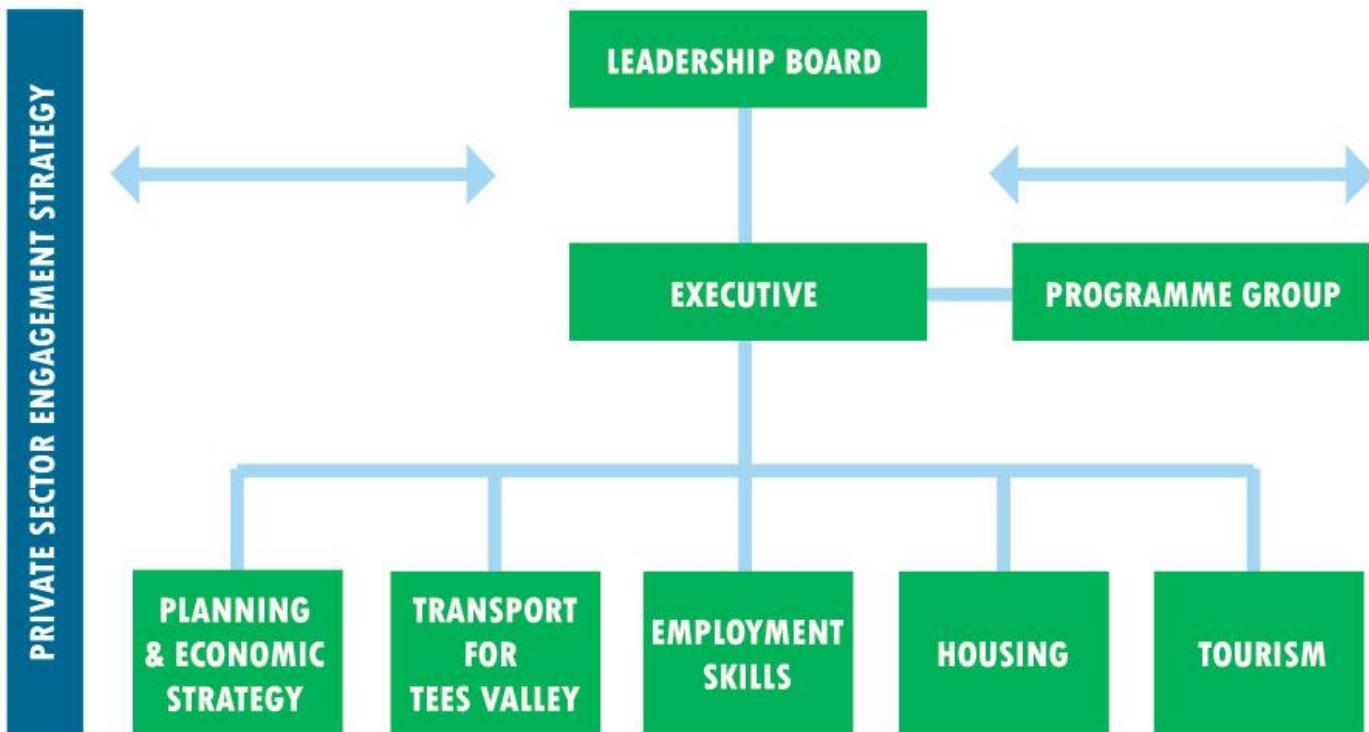
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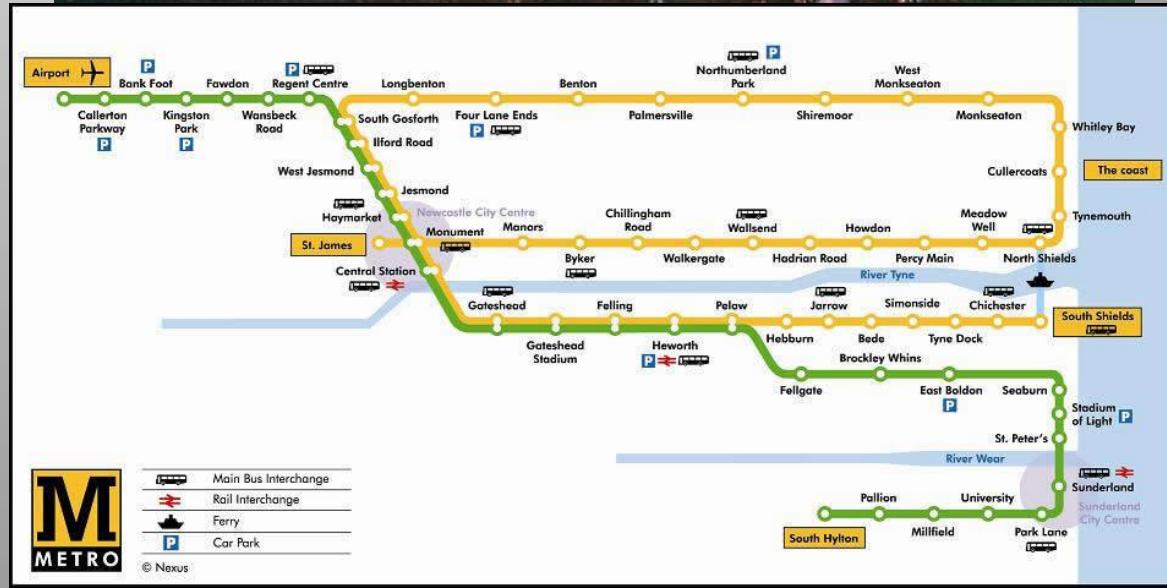
- MAJOR TRANSPORT SCHEMES**
- 1 A66 Dualling
 - 2 A66 Long Newton GSJ
 - 3 TV Heavy Rail Improvements
 - 4 Teesport Gauge Enhancements
 - 5 A66 Darlington Gateway
 - 6 TV Bus Network Improvements
 - 7 East Coast Main Line Upgrade
 - 8 A19/A66/A174 Improvements

Conurbation & Main Towns	TVR Development Sites	Green Belt	Durham Tees Valley Airport	Chemical expansion area
Sub-regional Centre	C - Central Park	Heritage Coast	Port Freight	W- Wilton
Main Town Centre	D - Durham Tees Valley Airport	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	River	B- Billingham
Regeneration Area Town	M - Middlehaven	International Nature Reserve	Strategic Road	S- Seaton Carew
Rural Service Centre	N - North Shore		Railway/station	University
Regeneration Area	V - Victoria Harbour		Freight only railway line	Public Transport Improvement
Prestige Employment Site			Strategic Public Transport Hubs	Regional Boundary

Tees Valley Governance

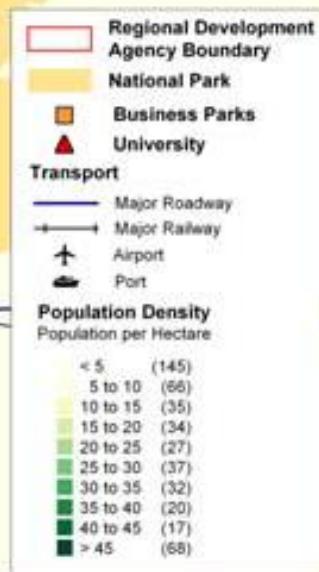


Tyne and Wear United?

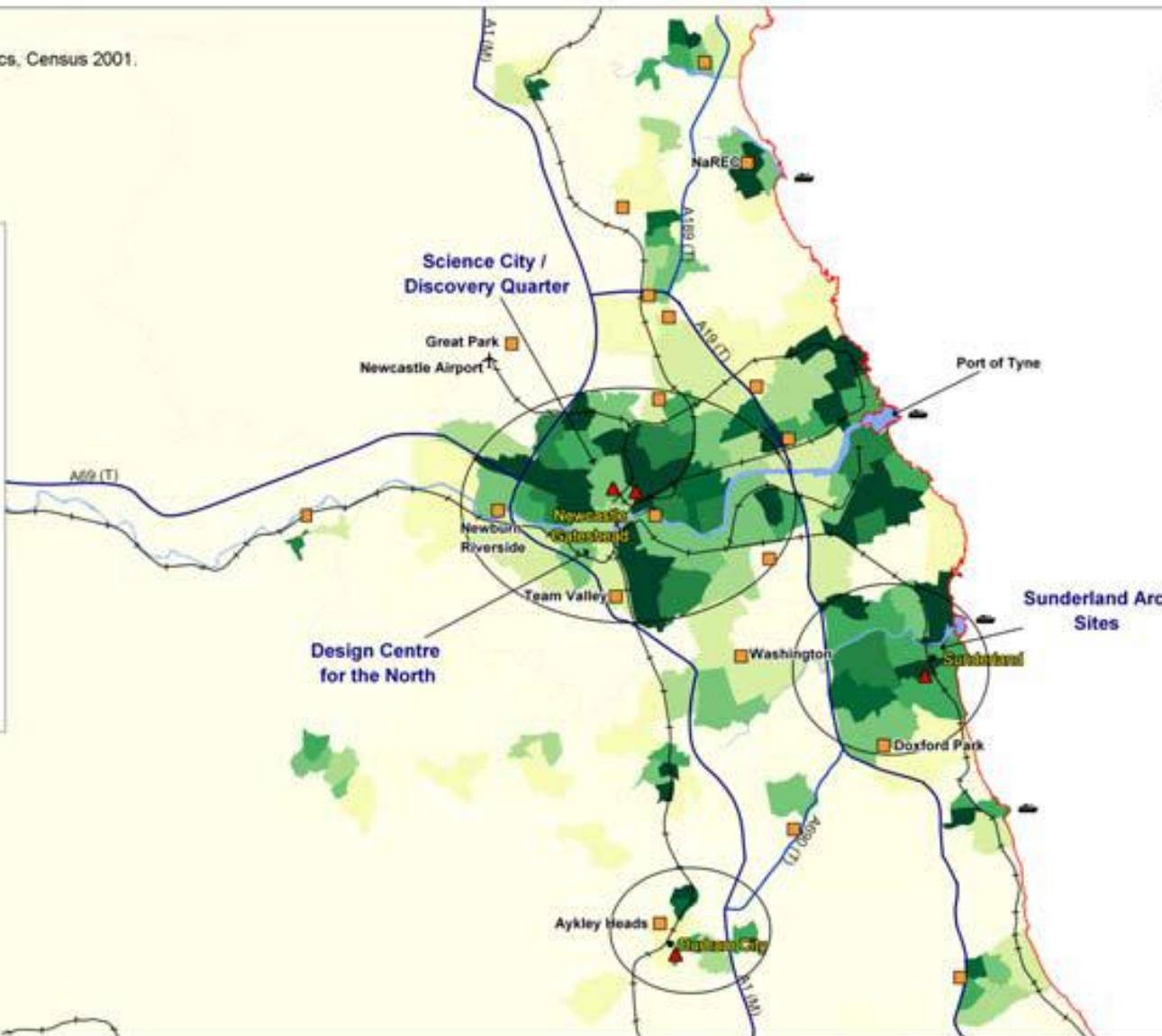


Map of Tyne and Wear City Region

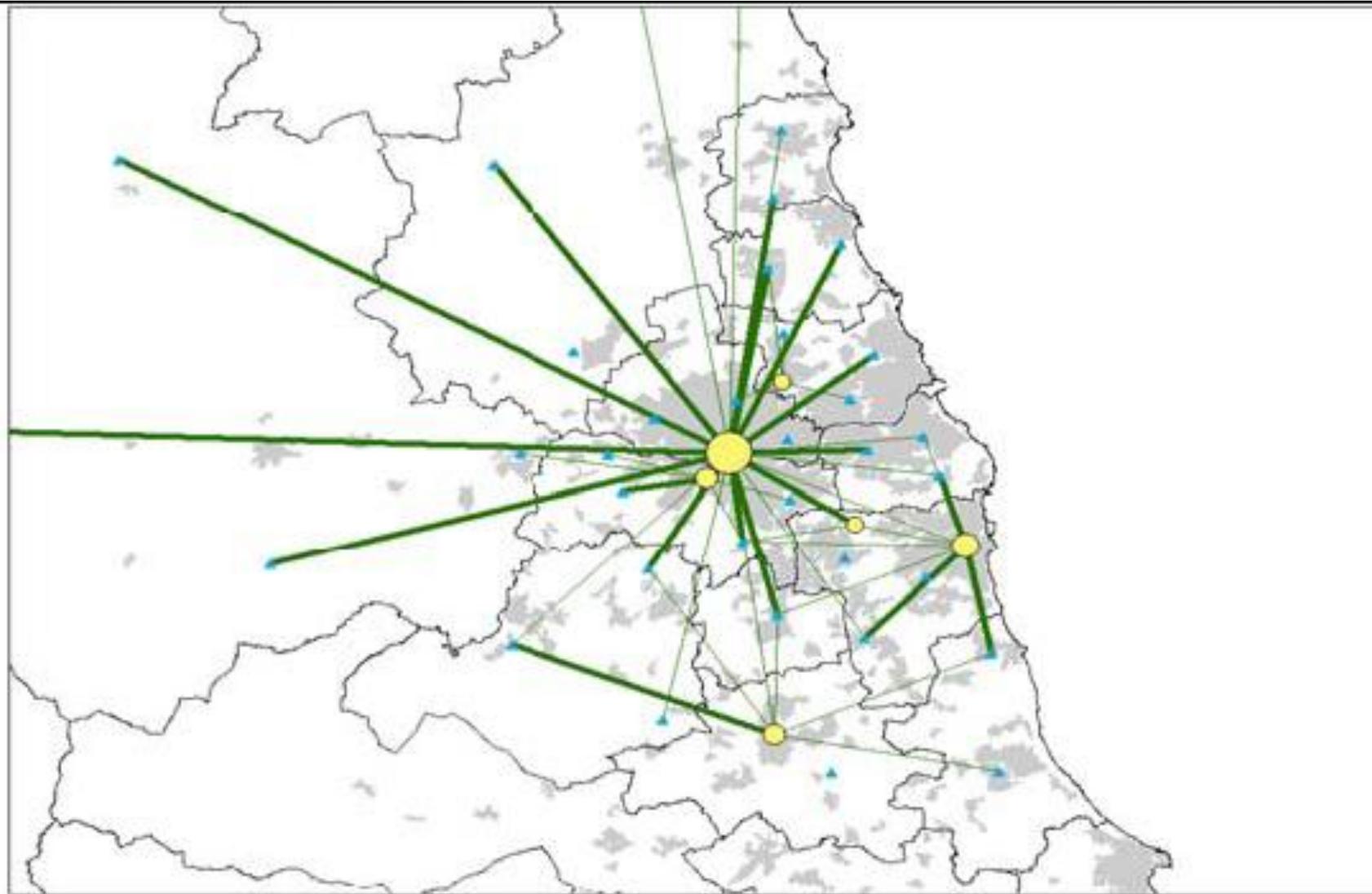
Source: One NorthEast, 2005
Office for National Statistics, Census 2001.



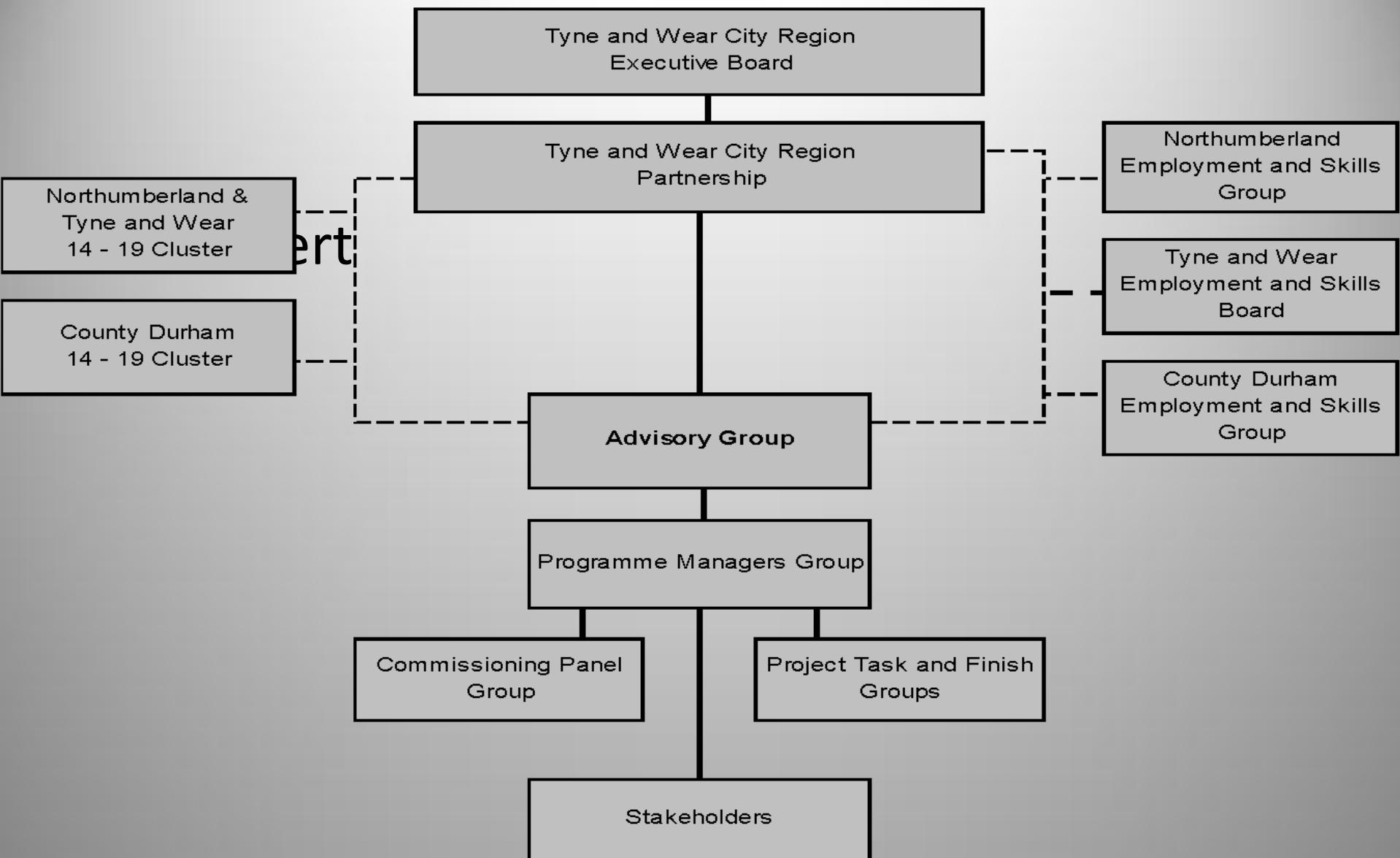
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kilometres



Tyne and Wear commuting patterns (TWCR 2006)



Tyne and Wear City Strategy Partnership



TYNE & WEAR
CITY REGION

Comparing Tees Valley/Tyne & Wear

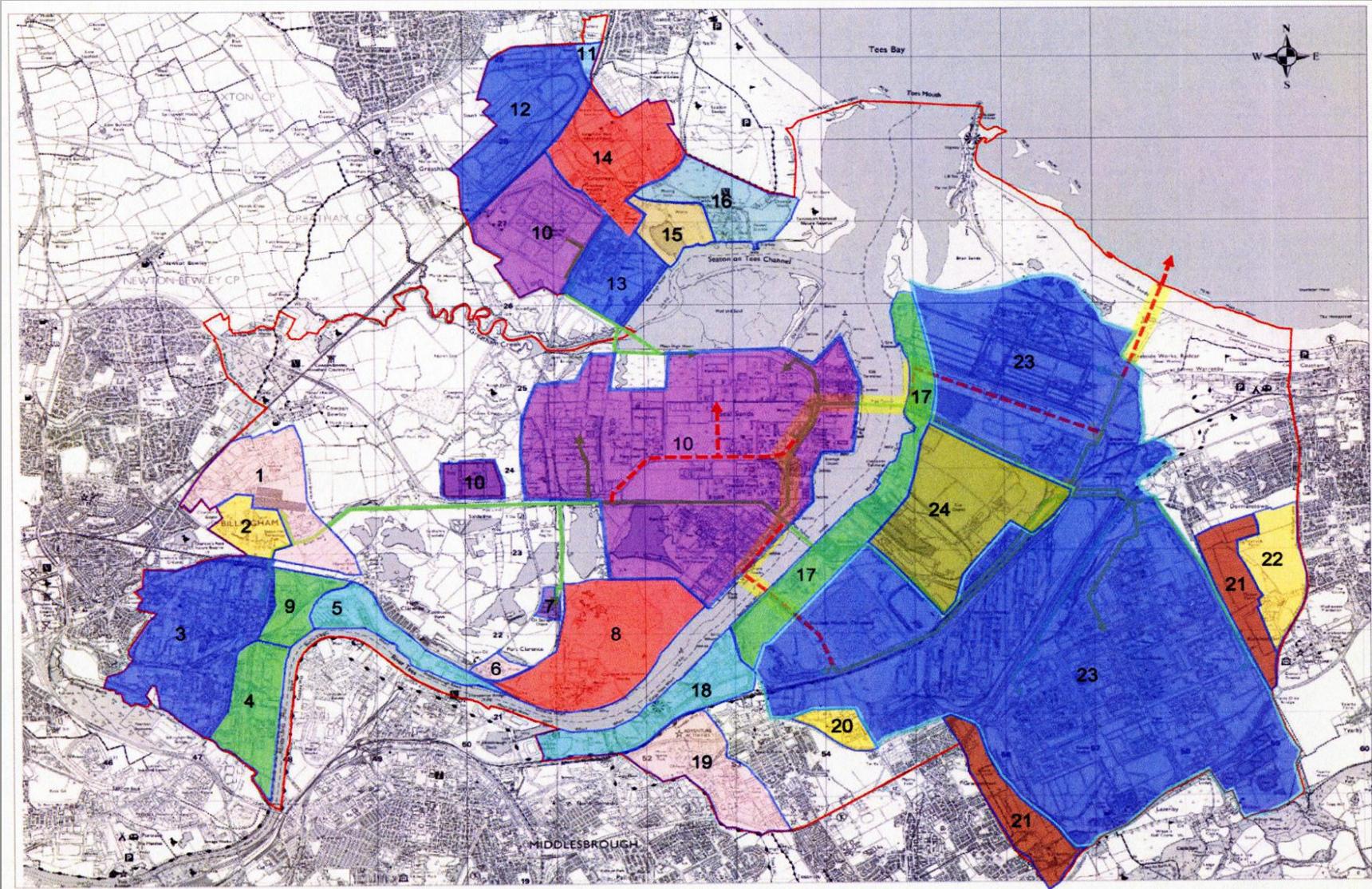
Characteristic	Tees Valley	Tyne and Wear
Population	650,000 core/850,000 wider sphere	1,650,000
Boundary	Tight/prescribed	Fuzzy/permeable
Profile	Heavy industry; energy generation; petro-chemical; steel; Tees-port	Professional services; 4 large universities; Nissan; Port of Tyne & offshore
Maturity	Mature (10 years in the making); continuity following abolition of Cleveland Metropolitan County	Immature (2 years); little remained after abolition of Tyne and Wear Metropolitan County; have had to rebuild structures
Partners	5 metropolitan authorities; coherent but exclusive	7 councils (5 metropolitan; 2 unitary counties); more inclusive
Governance	Non Local Government chair of leadership board; engagement with private sector	Representation by leaders of 7 authorities; technocratic organisation lacking external engagement at present
Future	Carbon capture & storage; process industries; transition to low carbon	Creative sector; electric vehicles; wind turbine manufacture; research and development

How will you reconcile the quality of economic development with quantity?

'through the prism of a low carbon agenda. We don't want more growth for growth's sake but a low carbon economy and society. We don't want growth that has trade-offs on the environment or generates displacement.'

(City Region Director)

North and South Tees draft land use plan (TVU 2010)



Existing pipeline corridors:
Possible new corridors:

Potential strategic sections:

Key Findings

- Policy development – incremental & chaotic
- Key drivers – economic growth and agglomeration
- Need for vertical and horizontal integration
- Locality matters
- History matters
- Striking differences between two city regions:
 - Tees Valley: robust governance; mature partnership
 - Tyne and Wear: weak governance; immature partnership

'The rescaling of state power never entails the creation of a 'blank slate' on which totally new scalar arrangements could be established, but occurs through a conflictual 'layering' process in which emergent rescaling strategies collide with, and only partially rework inherited landscapes of state scalar organization'

(Brenner, 2009, p.134)

The Future

- New Coalition Government
 - Abolition of Regional Planning and reform of RDAs
 - Referenda for directly elected single authority mayors for 12 largest cities in England (anticipated in Queens speech 25 May 2010)
- Further research:
 - Did regional agenda provoke the city region response?
 - Are city regions the right spatial level?
 - Can the success of city regions be measured by their enhanced ability to influence government?
 - Will they force LAs to confront economic realities?